

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 25

By Hood

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Bart Walker upon being recognized by the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters with the Distinguished Service Award.

WHEREAS, It is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who through their extraordinary efforts have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, One such noteworthy person is Bart Walker of WGNS in Murfreesboro, who has recently been recognized by the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters with the Distinguished Service Award; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker has enjoyed a long and illustrious career in radio broadcasting; his many good works in service of his community make him a most deserving recipient of this award; and

WHEREAS, His tenure as a radio personality began at the age of ten, when Mr. Walker ran a pirate radio station on the AM dial from a closet in his bedroom; he played the Hot Hits on WHOT until the day when the FCC came to his house and was given a tour of the "station" by his proud mother; and

WHEREAS, When young Mr. Walker was ordered to cease broadcasting on WHOT, he went looking for gainful employment at a licensed radio station; he quite fortuitously found veteran broadcaster Bill Barry, who offered him a Saturday night show every other weekend, thus beginning a career that has now spanned nearly forty years; and

WHEREAS, Such was his love for broadcasting, even at so young an age, that Bart Walker eventually convinced Mr. Barry to let him work every weekend, so that he would not forget how to run the board; Mr. Walker has always worked in the spirit of his mentor, and he recognizes the importance of giving young people a chance to get into broadcasting; and

WHEREAS, As a high school student at Nashville's Hillsboro High School, and in addition to his work at Springfield's WFMB, Mr. Walker made tapes for the local drive-in theater, working under the alias, Bart "Be-Bom" Walker; and

WHEREAS, After high school, he matriculated at Middle Tennessee State University; when he graduated from that institution in 1968, Mr. Walker worked for the Department of Education and then for an advertising agency in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker eventually heeded the call to return to broadcasting; in 1971, he signed on to help Bill Barry build WAMB-AM, the station which he served astutely as Vice President and Station Manager for fourteen years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker has also worked for a number of other stations throughout Middle Tennessee, including WMTS in Murfreesboro, WBRY in Woodbury, and WLAC in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Not content to merely work for other people's stations, he moved back to Murfreesboro to become an owner of WGNS-AM 1450 in 1985; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his career in radio, Mr. Walker has proven himself to be a dedicated public servant, working under the philosophy that in order to make his business profitable, he must be a part of the community. He allots over 100 drive-time hours each month

to allow community leaders to get feedback from the public on local issues; and he maintains a listener-driven station that is dedicated to family programming; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker believes in a hands-on approach to broadcasting; he hosts the popular program, "Action Line," which includes numerous interviews with community leaders, and "The Morning Show," a swap-and-shop program during which listeners can also call in to discuss pertinent issues; and

WHEREAS, He is now sole owner, with his family, of WGNS, the Good Neighbor Station, the mission statement of which includes supporting the Constitution of the United States, strengthening family values, fighting drugs, reducing crime and doing business by the Golden Rule; and

WHEREAS, Bart Walker has also introduced a television station to the Good Neighbor family, WETV Channel 11; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker's dedication to his public has earned him the unwavering loyalty of listeners and advertisers alike, and he has also earned the respect of his fellow broadcasters, who elected him to serve as President of the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters; moreover, WGNS was selected last year as a Crystal Finalist by the National Association of Broadcasters, the highest honor for community service a radio station can attain; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his work in broadcasting, Mr. Walker still finds time to lend his remarkable talents to service on numerous boards and to serving as President of numerous organizations and clubs, including the PTO and Crimestoppers; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker is also active in his church, where he serves as an Elder; and

WHEREAS, His many accomplishments aside, Mr. Walker is most grateful for the love and companionship he shares with his wife of 36 years, Leigh Ann, who serves WGNS as a salesperson and director of special projects; his son, Scott, sales manager of WGNS; his daughter, Kristin, who is soon to graduate from Middle Tennessee State University and serves

the radio station as a staff member; and his grandson, whom all agree will carry on the "Be-Bom" tradition, as he teethes on the family microphone; and

WHEREAS, Bart Walker epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, This General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Mr. Walker for his dedication to Murfreesboro and Rutherford County and their citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and recognize Mr. Scott Barton "Bart" Walker, III, owner of WGNS Radio, upon his receiving the Distinguished Service Award from the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters. We thank him for all he has done to serve his community as a good neighbor and friend, and we wish him every success in his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation, with this final clause omitted from such copy.